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NOTES AND GLEANINGS

A college student watching a librarian at work supplied a name for Melvil Dewey's classification that library school students should find appropriate, when she asked "What do you call that system—the Dewey Dismal system?"

Library work is somewhat like an iceberg; one ninth is visible, and eight-ninths are hidden below the surface. Many patrons see the routine stamping and discharging of books which anyone can perform, but do not understand the more important work that goes on beneath the surface. (Annual Report, Springfield City Library Assoc. Quoted in Library Journal, Feb. 1, 1948)

A resident of Iowa on Red Cross duty abroad found her public library card a big help in getting around, according to the A L A Bulletin, Feb. 1948. Her Cedar Rapids Public Library card got her past the Russian check point going into Berlin. The library card from her home town, Bedford, saw her safely across the border from Nancy to Brussels.

The Monmouth County Library, New Jersey, offered a prize for a design for a sign to be used on all its branches. It was to be in two colors and contain not more than six words. The winner showed a symbolic Lamp of learning, with FREE BOOKS HERE above it and MONMOUTH COUNTY LIBRARY underneath. A standard sign for county libraries is considered valuable because it enables residents who move around to locate the local source of books readily, and it indicates to citizens that there is a county-wide library system. (Wilson Bulletin, Jan. 1948)

According to the annual survey made by the A L A, public library readers during 1947 were most interested in personal problems, considerably interested in housing and business, and only slightly interested in international affairs. High prices of foods and labor brought demand for cook-books and for books on home repairs. Many women leaving industrial work showed renewed interest in handicrafts. In fiction, historical fiction and novels dealing with social problems were popular, the latter particularly in regions where such problems were small. Circulation showed a general increase, with especially notable increases in children's reading in some places.

The big snow storm in New York brought a record attendance to the New York Public Library three days after it happened. On Dec. 29, 1947 well over 10,000 people were in the main building at Fifth Avenue and Forty-Second St. In the afternoon, the library was so crowded that SRO signs (Standing room only) went up in many reading rooms. The reason was that readers and researchers who regularly study there had been snowbound and could not reach the library for lack of transportation. (Gaylord's Triangle)

In two articles in the Library Journal, the editor of a Michigan newspaper tells some of his reactions to the way public libraries function. Among ways he suggests for libraries to make a better impression on the public are these:

Make the library attractive, with plants, good pictures and easy chairs with floor lamps. Smoking might even be permitted. Public libraries could learn something from Army libraries along this line. What impressed many people about service libraries was the atmosphere, not severe and restrained in civilian libraries but cheerful and comfortable.

Advertise! Beside free publicity libraries might get newspaper space paid for by friendly merchants, or use some petty cash to put teasers in the classified ads. Like this: "Found-a book that tells how to repair plumbing." See Miss Jones at the Public Library". Link the library up with whatever is going on. If there is a famous person in town, send to the paper a list of books by or about him that the library has. If a volcano erupts in Mexico, make that the starting point for a round-up of books on volcanoes or on Mexico.

At a cost of \$6.50 the Teaneck Library, N.J. bought a baby-tender where Mothers park their small children while they select books at their leisure. There are beads on a rod in front of the seat, and the library supplied picture books to amuse the child. The idea has proved very popular with both parents and children. (Wilson Bulletin)

SOME SUGGESTIONS-by REQUEST

Sister Francis de Sales, Mt. St. Vincent College.

In October, the Halifax Library Club spent an evening at Mount Saint Vincent College. As Sister Frances Dolores, the librarian at Reserve Mines, and I had the great good fortune of attending the C L A Convention in Vancouver and the A L A Convention in San Francisco, it was but natural that our never-to-be-forgotten trip should be the topic of the evening.

Whenever possible, my companion and I had visited libraries in search of ideas. Our editor, Miss Cullen, who was at the meeting, has asked me to pass some of these on to the readers of the Bulletin. Meeting librarians at work was a most heart-warming experience,--all were eager to help, to share ideas, and to discuss difficulties. Despite the vastly better public and University libraries of the West, everywhere we heard the same complaint of lack of space, outgrown facilities,--we had that at least in common.

At the Library School of St. Catherine's College, St. Paul, I first saw MAGFILES. We all know how hard it is to keep magazines and pamphlets looking tidy. Here was a solution. MAGFILES come in two parts,-- a frame and an outer piece to fold around this frame and turn in at the back, making the opening of the box into which magazines are put. They have a tan buckram finish and come in three widths-B, C, D (2", 2½", 3" wide) and thirteen different height and depth dimensions. A chart is sent by the company, and with it you can measure your magazines and decide on the sizes you need. The price is moderate, \$2.20 a dozen or \$2.00 per dozen for 12 dozen or more, and the duty does not add much to their cost. With each box, two labels are supplied, but we have not used them. Labels have a mean way of coming unstuck, so we printed the title of the periodicals and the volume and year in white with the electric stylus (you might prefer black or dark blue transfer paper) and then we shellacked the whole box. At that point we stood back to admire the transformed shelves--neat, symmetrical, good-looking. Now, not only magazines and pamphlets, but our rare books are housed in MAGFILES. Why not write to the company, ask for their chart, and perhaps a sample? The address is:

The MAGFILE Company
2234 Eugenia Street,
St. Louis 3, Missouri

If you are near a hospital, have you ever asked for their empty X-ray boxes? These in different sizes, painted green, make useful, firm containers for papers, pamphlets, etc. We painted the tops of the smaller boxes and in them have stood our Publishers' Weekly, tied together, with the volume number and dates printed in white by the stylus. These, too, look neat on the shelves and are easily accessible.

For periodicals which we cannot afford to bind (and the difficulty of getting any binding done here increases yearly, as does the cost of it) we drill two, or in larger magazines, three holes, and tie a volume or where that is too cumbersome, the half-yearly volume, together with shoe strings. We have found that even good string frays and breaks, and then the metal tip of the shoe string makes the threading easier. The drilling can be hard manual work; but Kerr-Ellams Office Appliance Ltd., 243 Hollis Street, Halifax, can supply a machine that is easily adjustable, and drills more neatly and exactly with less effort. It costs \$35.00 but the saving in time and energy where there are many magazines to be done would probably justify the expenditure.

Again, if you are near a hospital, why not ask them for their used X-ray films? If these are soaked carefully in hot water with washing soda or lye, the film can be easily removed, and they can then be used in a variety of ways. A Sister in one of our Western hospitals made covers of the films for the better children's books. In the case of the large-sized d'Aulaires, de Angelis, and others with attractive jackets, she punched holes all around the cover and the side flaps and threaded them together with colored wool or guimp. Where jackets were dull or books soiled, Sister lined the film with samples of gay wall paper and threaded as before. The books looked not unlike Newberry's "Pretty Little Flowered Books", and they added much to the interest and attractiveness of the book truck. Narrpw strips of Gaylord's Mystic Tape can also be used for binding; this takes less time than the perforation, and it makes a professional looking magazine cover.

It was at the Edgonton Public Library that I saw the Mitten's white plastic letters. Though this is a Carnegie Library, it does not conform to the usual

pattern and the whole main floor, except for an office and boardroom at the back is a wide open space. Separations are made merely by cases grouped together. It is painted a most pleasing shade of light green with silver trim throughout. Just to the left of the entrance is a good-sized alcove for women, a most restful spot for a tired shopper, with comfortable chintz-covered arm chairs, tables with magazines appealing to women, and books. A large bulletin board took up one side and here, in bold white plastic letters, was "How's your Cooking?" and then displayed were the attractive jackets of the newest cook books.

At the far left of the entrance were the stacks, silver enamelled, with a green canvas-covered board hanging on the end, each with the subject of the books in that row and the Dewey class number in the Mitten's letters. It was possible to read them easily from a distance so that you wasted no time going to the section you wanted. These letters come in five or six sizes, and can be had from:

Lillies Display Products
941 View Street,
Victoria, B.C.

so there is no duty to pay. They also carry alphabets of gold cardboard letters—I bought two sizes of the plastic and hope soon to add a third which is larger and so requires more space to show to advantage. They also sell display boards in two sizes covered with darker blue leatherette (costing only \$1.60). I think it would be possible to get pieces of wall board and cover these with material that would hold the pins. We have used colored cardboard over our bulletin boards effectively. The letters can be painted to any color you want in show card paint which washes off easily. They certainly solve your problem when you have no good printer on the staff. Be sure you ask for letters with pins in them—the others are used with a special board only. A device to help you get your letters straight is to stretch a string tautly over the board as guide. Incidentally, do you know the set of stencil letters got from Stenso Lettering Company, Baltimore, Maryland? They, too, come in various sizes and are most useful. The two Mitten alphabets and the one bulletin board cost \$19.45, to which must be added express charges.

The Edmonton Public Library had a most attractive, colorful children's room. Just in the centre was what looked like two magazine stands, back-to-back, except that this was built together and had curved ends instead of sharp corners to save little people from hurt. Here were displayed the larger sized juveniles. As the fronts of the shelves were of glass, the whole book could be seen.

There was one thing I did not see elsewhere which we have in our People's Library. Miss Cullen included that in the list of things she wanted mentioned. For our little people there is a special corner with a bench—69½" long, 12¾" wide, and 18" high—and a table with a sloping top, such as you see in pictures of the medieval monks, illuminating their precious manuscripts—(78" long and 17½" wide) There is a projection ¾" wide that holds the books and here the youngsters love to sit with picture books spread out before them. Another thing we did has been satisfactory—from pieces of the surbase our carpenter made valences for the windows which hook on and conceal the rod on which the drapes hang. On the valence we have painted a design, colored to match the room. The wood itself in in the natural color, merely shellacked. Our drapes are very gay glazed chintz, which after a year and one-half of service, are only now beginning to need a washing.

One last suggestion. Do you leave the same pictures hanging on your walls all the time? Have you space for only a few pictures? Then, why not have frames with easily adjustable backs that can be quickly removed and change your pictures quite often?

Do you know Rojankovsky's set of eight Mother Goose Pictures; sold by Simon and Shust-r? Variety can be given to your Children's Room by placing one of these pictures in a frame such as the one just mentioned, and then changing it every month or so.

The Book-of-the-Month Club recently printed three portfolios of beautiful reproductions of the mast-rpieces on the covers of their magazine. These can be used for display purposes; but are equally well suited to framing, and are also some of the exquisite cards carried by Dennison's and also by Austin, Toronto, of the Chinese artist, Chang Shu-Chi. These, mounted on a large mat, and framed in narrow bamboo, would make an exquisite group of four which could be changed occasionally. Also on sale in Halifax is a striking set of cards with Leonard Brooks' colorful Maritime scenes for another group.

Now that these few suggestions are down on paper they hardly seem worth passing on; but with them go my good wishes for a very happy, successful year in this ever-increasing but always absorbing work that is ours.

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PLANS FOR REGIONAL LIBRARY IN ANNAPOLIS COUNTY

(from the Halifax Chronicle, Jan. 15 and 23, 1948)

On Jan. 22, 1948.

The Municipal Council of Annapolis County voted to establish a Regional Library in Annapolis County as an experiment with a yearly vote of \$3,000, providing they have a majority vote on the board.

According to the proposed library plan for Annapolis County drawn up by Miss Marion Moshier, extension librarian of New York State, who was recently brought to Nova Scotia to study the library situation in this province and make recommendations for the method of handling, library service would be provided for all communities of Annapolis County at an annual cost of only \$4,500. Two-thirds of the total cost will be borne by the Municipality of Annapolis and the remaining \$1,500 will be borne by the three towns. On a basis of population the contributions from Annapolis, Bridgetown and Middleton will be \$405, \$495, and \$600 respectively. An additional contribution will be made by the town of Annapolis which will donate free quarters in the Community Centre for the Library Centre of the County during the three-year trial period. The Provincial Government will match the county's contribution of \$4,500 per year with another \$4,500 and in addition will each year pay \$2,500 for the cataloguing and buying services and another \$2,400 for the services of the "demonstration librarian". The amount allotted by the Carnegie grant for the initial book stock is \$6000.

From the Annapolis Centre will be established distribution centres throughout the County. Deposit collections will be placed in schools, Post Offices, Town Halls, and with club groups, or in other quarters provided by the community. In each community the book stock will consist of from 100 to 1,000 or 2,000 books-depending upon the size of the community headquarters and local interests and needs. Special requests would be filled by mail and shipments made by mail, express, freight or car. By this special procedure all books in this system might be borrowed by anyone living in the county at no cost whatsoever to the borrower.

Approval of the plan has been given by the Provincial Government. The three year experiment is planned:

- (1) As a demonstration and incentive to other counties
- (2) To determine what service a unit of 18,000 people can efficiently carry.
- (3) To set up a pattern for a larger region.

AMHERST GETS MORE BOOKS

(Halifax Chronicle, Feb.13)

Continuing its policy to make the Public Library one of the best in the Province, the Amherst Library Commission authorized the expenditure of \$200 to secure new books in addition to the regular expenditure of 25 books a month. The larger outlay was made possible through a private campaign conducted by A. D. Smith each year to raise funds for the library, which this year made the record total of \$335. The Librarian's report for January showed that 1,123 books had been borrowed during the month.

REGIONAL LIBRARIES IN SASKATCHEWAN

(By Marion Gilroy in the Saskatchewan Lib. Assoc. Bulletin)

Throughout the province there has been a gratifying interest in the idea of regional libraries. After visiting many of the public Libraries in the Province last winter, the Supervisor of Regional Libraries has been doing promotional work. Talks have been given at the University of Saskatchewan's Farm Week, at Homemakers' provincial and regional conventions, farm meetings, cooperative schools, agricultural committees, Home and School Association conventions and meetings, and to many similar groups. Displays have been arranged frequently to show the type of books available in a regional library. Wide use has been made of the films "Library on Wheels" and "It's all yours."

Limitations of funds and staff have made it impossible to do intensive work in more than one part of the province. There has been a concentration of effort in the Shellbrook-Prince Albert-Melfort-Nipawin area, where the interest was found to be greatest. The library board in Prince Albert, the mayor and city council, and many organizations have considered favorably the idea of the city becoming part of a regional library system. Many organizations in the towns are desirous of coming into a scheme which will increase the number and variety of books in their existing libraries. The prospect of the changing book collections and the privilege of borrowing any book in the whole regional library area appeals to the many discriminating readers in this part of the province.

Unfortunately, crops have been light in the North this year, and this may delay the voting of money for regional library service in some municipalities. In others, members of the municipal councils as well as interested individuals have said that the library is needed now as never before. The secretary of one municipality declared: "This regional library will pay for itself over and over again. The day we stop learning we stop living."
